



# CECOM Science & Technology (S&T) Reinvention Lab

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## FIRST RATING CYCLE COMPLETED FOR DEMO EMPLOYEES

The first rating cycle for demo employees began on 10 February 2002 and ended on 31 January 2003. As promised there was a full dress rehearsal at the mid-point in August. This was designed to help everyone understand the process, use the automated Performance Evaluation Tool (PET) and gain insight and experience in applying the benchmarks, scoring the performance elements, and reconciling scores across the organization.

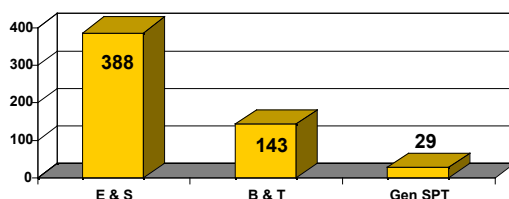
Employees were given “mock” appraisals, at the mid-point, reflecting scores in each of the performance elements, a total performance score and the performance payout information.

Following the mid-point we tested the use of an on-line survey to gather feedback on supervisory performance from the employee’s perspective, solicit comments on the appraisal process and the automated tool.

Your feedback was very valuable and was used to make improvements to the process and will continue to be used in the future.

### Final Results

A total of 560 employees were rated in the RDEC for the rating period ending 31 January 03. The chart below illustrates the number of employees in each of the three occupational families: Engineers & Scientists (E&S), Business & Technical (B&T) and General Support (Gen SPT).



### Pay Pools

By definition a pay pool is a grouping of employees for the purpose of determining the performance payouts. For this first rating period, employees were grouped into four separate pay pools. An RDEC Supervisory Pay Pool, a NVESD Supervisory Pay Pool, a NVESD Non-Supervisory Pay Pool and a C2D Non-Supervisory Pay Pool.

Pay pool funding was set at 3.8% of the total base salaries of those that were eligible to be rated as of 31 January. Salaries of employees who enter the demonstration project after the end of the rating period or those employees with less than 120 days on approved performance objectives in the demo were not rated and their salaries were not included in the pay pool funding.

The Personnel Management Board will review the pay pool funding annually and may recommend adjustments to the payout percentages.

PERSONNEL  
DEMO

## Performance Pay Outs

An analysis of the pay outs indicates that 85% of the employees received a base pay increase of 1.5% or greater. 28% received a base pay increase of 3% or greater. Under the GS system, 1.5% represents the average within-grade increase per year. 3% represents a full within-grade or step increase.

The following chart illustrates the actual High, Average and Low Performance Payouts for each of the pay pools.

**\* This chart reflects actual performance payouts. Employees who scored between 10 and 20 were not eligible for a payout.**

	<b>RDEC SUPV 96 employees</b>	<b>NVESD Supv 57 employees</b>	<b>NVESD NON-Supv 372 employees</b>	<b>C2D NON-Supv 35 employees</b>
<b>High</b>	<b>\$7012</b>	<b>5.9% (\$6787)</b>	<b>7.1% (\$7599)</b>	<b>5.22% (\$5476)</b>
<b>Avg</b>	<b>\$4003</b>	<b>3.7% (\$3789)</b>	<b>3.8% (\$2831)</b>	<b>3.34% (\$2846)</b>
<b>Low*</b>	<b>\$614</b>	<b>1.1% (\$1113)</b>	<b>0.3% (\$196)</b>	<b>.63% (\$402)</b>

## Lessons Learned

With one cycle done, are there still areas for improvement? Absolutely! One topic that continues to surface is the quality of Performance Objectives. Performance objectives play a critical role in the performance evaluation process. The performance objectives are the foundation on which the system is built.

- They need to be reviewed and approved each year within 30 days of the new rating period
- They need to reflect salary increases and increased expectations
- They need to define a task and a result
- They need to be in place, approved and employees performing under them for a minimum of 120 days for employees to be rated

While templates or guides were developed for all RDEC supervisory/team leader positions and at NVESD many of the non-supervisory positions, we have found instances of employees/raters copying the templates without adding individual specifics and additional specific objectives as necessary.

For example under the category Technology Development, Leveraging and Interaction:

### PERSONNEL DEMO

The Personnel Demo Newsletter is an unofficial publication authorized under the provisions of AR 360-81. It is published for employees of Communications-Electronics, Research, Development and Engineering Center and Software Engineering Center to create a better understanding of the S&T Personnel Demo. The views and opinions expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the Department of the Army.  
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“Build effective partnerships with industry, academia, other Army organizations (Employees/ Raters should specify the organizations as appropriate e.g., DARPA and ARL), Joint/Service organizations, and international countries to leverage best of technologies available.”

“Achieve successful transition of technology into projects/systems.”  
(Employees/Raters should provide a specific example)

### *Remember the “Three Easy Pieces”*

1. A performance objective defines an important task with the expected result.
2. The performance objective defines an employee’s responsibility in the task toward achieving the result.
3. A performance objective has appropriate metrics (goal, timeline, quantity and quality, etc.)

### *How many Objectives?*

1. There’s no magic number. Make sure the important things are covered. Most guidance suggests 3 to 10 objectives are good.
2. Be concise but complete.
3. A set of good objectives should cover the key functions in your job. Identify these first and write one or more performance objectives for each key function.

## **Training and Information**

Training was offered to Fort Monmouth employees new to the demo project on 3-4 June. Additionally, there will be a refresher overview for Raters in preparation for the mid-point reviews in each of the Fort Monmouth directorates in mid-August.

New employees can also use the on-line tutorial – just go to the URL below and select On-Line Tutorial from the column of choices on the left side of the page <http://www.monmouth.army.mil/cecom/rdec/PersDemo/main.htm>

In addition to the existing on-line tutorial for new employees, a supervisory tutorial has been developed on CD. Supervisors can request a copy by contacting Don Jenkins NVESD, (DSN 654-1129), Jeff Fowler NVESD (DSN 644-1186 or Prudy White DSN 987-4900).

## **A new personnel system on the horizon...**

In April we alerted the workforce of a potential plan that would impact our demo project under a DOD initiative called Best Practices or BP for short. BP would be an interim personnel system for the S&T Personnel Demo Projects before all of DOD converts to the proposed National Security Personnel System – NSPS.

DoD expressed its intention to implement BP using the legislative authority for S&T Demonstration projects. In simple terms this means employees currently under an S&T Demo Project would convert to BP and then when NSPS became law the rest of DoD would follow. In April when we alerted the workforce of this potential change we encouraged employees to send comments during the public comment period. As of this writing, the DoD staff is reviewing the comments and the status of BP is unknown.

DoD is however proceeding with its plans for NSPS and has submitted a legislative package to Capital Hill. Secretary Rumsfeld has been quoted as saying, “the department is handcuffed by its reliance on an antiquated personnel system. He called today’s civilian personnel system, an industrial age organization struggling to perform in an information age world.”

We have been tracking the legislation and so far, in May the House modified the original proposal, and on 17 June the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee approved the bipartisan bill with some additional amendments. One amendment authored by Senator George V. Voinovich (R-Ohio) would exclude DoD research laboratories from any personnel overhaul. It is uncertain, however, whether this amendment will survive the legislative process and make it into the final bill.

More to follow on this evolving legislation.....

So how does NSPS compare to our demonstration project?

NSPS seeks to capitalize on the success of demonstration projects and alternate personnel systems that have been testing new approaches, so you will see many similarities. Highlights of the new system include:

- Pay banding with a specific design for each of five career groups (as opposed to our three occupational families).
- A pay-for-performance evaluation model that scores performance on a scale from 0 to 100 points computed as the weighted average of six performance factors (We use a scale of 0 to 50 also computed as the weighted average of four or five performance elements).
- Employees can earn up to 16 shares as compared to our maximum of 5.
- In the area of hiring, NSPS calls for “on-the-spot-hiring,” for positions where there is a severe shortage of candidates or for a position with unique qualifications.

## Quote of the Day

“I believe that in many ways public service is the highest service. And that is because it is the hardest and most necessary for our nation’s future.”

*Dr. Charles H. Levine, former Distinguished Professor of Government and Public Administration at American University.*